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## Your Right To Claim Good Cause

The NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) requires people who apply for Financial Assistance To Needy Families (FANF) cash or medical assistance to work with and help the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS). DCSS tries to prove paternity and get medical and financial child support for all children who get assistance. In most cases, you must work with and help DCSS in locating absent parents, proving paternity, and getting child support for your children.

In some cases you must also assign your rights to child support to DCSS. This means that you give DCSS the right to set up and enforce medical child support for your children and collect and be given any child support money payments for any child in your household who gets assistance. DCSS uses any money collected to pay back the state and federal government for the assistance given to you.

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## What Cooperation Means

You may be asked to go to a DHHS District Office, to Court, or to meet with someone from DCSS to:

- Give the name of the non-custodial parent and, possibly, the names of the grandparents of the children.
  - Give any information that will help find the non-custodial parent or grandparents.
  - Help with legally proving paternity, if the paternity of your children has not been proven.
  - Help get money owed to your children by giving information, completing forms, and appearing in court when asked.
  - Pay DCSS, if asked, any child support money which is given directly to you by the non-custodial parent or responsible grandparents. (If you do this, the amount of child support you get and pay DCSS does not lessen the amount of cash assistance you can get.)
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## It Benefits You!

Working with and helping DCSS helps you and your children because you may:

- Find a non-custodial parent.
  - Legally prove the paternity of your children.
  - Get court-ordered child support payments.
  - Get Social Security, Veterans, or other government benefits for you and your child.
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## If You Do Not Cooperate

As a condition of eligibility, all FANF applicants and recipients must work with and help DCSS.

If you are required to cooperate in getting child support, and do not without a “**good cause**” reason:

- Your FANF cash assistance from the Family Assistance Program or the New Hampshire Employment Program will not begin, or, if started, be reduced by 25%.
  - Your FANF cash assistance from the Interim Disabled Parent program or Families With Older Children program will not begin, or, if started, will end.
  - Medical assistance for the adults in your family will end.
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## What are ‘Good Cause’ Reasons?

There may be situations when you have a **good cause** reason for not working with and helping DCSS. Good cause may be claimed:

- when cooperation is likely to cause serious physical or emotional harm to you or your children;
- when you, or a family member, are or have been a victim of family/domestic violence;
- if your child was born as a result of incest or rape;
- whenever legal proceedings for the adoption of your child is pending before a court; or
- whenever you are discussing the possibility of placing the children for adoption with a social worker, and the discussions have been going on for less than three months.

If one of these conditions exists, you may have a **good cause** reason for not working with DCSS.

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## How To Claim Good Cause

You can claim **good cause** for not working with or helping DCSS by telling your worker at the DHHS District Office (DO). If you are a new applicant, you may make a claim at any time you think you have a **good cause** reason not to cooperate. A worker will help you make a claim.

**Note:** If more than one non-custodial parent is responsible for the support of the children in your care, you may work with and help DCSS in getting support from one non-custodial parent, but claim **good cause** for not working with or helping DCSS for another parent.

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## Proving Good Cause

If you claim **good cause** for not working with DCSS, you must:

- Tell your DHHS worker the reason(s) why you cannot work with or help DCSS.
- Give written proof of your **good cause** claim.
  - Note:** If your reason for claiming **good cause** is fear of family/domestic violence and it is impossible to get the required proof, DHHS may still be able to approve a good cause claim.
- Give the proof within 20 days after claiming good cause.

If you have problems getting the required proof, tell your DHHS worker. Your worker may be able to help you get the necessary proofs. If proof is hard to get, the 20-day limit may be extended.

After you have given us the proof, DHHS will decide if you have **good cause** based on the proof you gave us.

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## Acceptable Documentation

Listed below are examples of the types of proof that you can give us to support your **good cause** claim.

- Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological, or law enforcement records that show that the non-custodial parent might become physically or emotionally harmful to you or the children.
- Medical records that show the emotional medical history and present health status of you or your children.
- A written statement from a mental health professional which describes your current emotional health status and that explains cooperation with the child support requirements would cause emotional harm.
- Birth certificates or other records which show that legal proceedings for adoption are pending in court.
- A written statement from people such as friends, neighbors, clergymen, social workers or medical professionals who know the circumstances that have led to your good cause claim.
- A written statement from a social worker from a public or private social agency, or an agency providing family/domestic violence services.
- A sworn statement from you when the good cause claim is for family/domestic violence.

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## The Decision On Your Claim

You will be told of the decision made on your **good cause** claim. DCSS will review all decisions. If the claim is approved, DCSS will **not** try to prove paternity or get support from the non-custodial parent named in the approved good cause claim. If the claim is denied, you must meet the cooperation requirement.

If you are not satisfied with the decision, you may ask for an administrative appeal.

## Department of Health and Human Services Offices & Phone Numbers

### BERLIN

650 Main St. Ste. 200  
Berlin, NH 03570-2496  
752-7800 or  
800-972-6111  
FAX: 752-3208

### CLAREMONT

17 Water Street Ste. 301  
Claremont, NH 03743-2280  
542-9544 or  
800-982-1001  
FAX: 542-2367

### CONCORD

40 Terrill Park Drive  
Concord, NH 03301-9955  
271-6201  
800-322-9191  
FAX: 271-6451

### CONWAY

73 Hobbs Street  
Conway, NH 03818-6188  
447-3841 or  
800-552-4628  
FAX: 447-1988

### KEENE

111 Key Road  
Keene, NH 03431  
357-3510 or  
800-624-9700  
FAX: 352-2598

### LACONIA

65 Beacon Street West  
Laconia, NH 03246-9988  
524-4485 or  
800-322-2121  
FAX: 528-4105

### LITTLETON

80 North Littleton Road  
Littleton, NH 03561-3841  
444-6786 or  
800-552-8959  
FAX: 444-0348

### MANCHESTER

1050 Perimeter Rd Ste. 501  
Manchester, NH 03103-3303  
668-2330 or  
800-852-7493  
FAX: 668-5442

### SOUTHERN

3 Pine St. Ext., Ste. Q  
Nashua, NH 03060-3213  
883-7726 or  
800-852-0632  
FAX: 883-2064

### SEACOAST

50 International Dr.  
Portsmouth, NH 03801-2862  
433-8300  
800-821-0326  
FAX: 431-0731

### ROCHESTER

115 Wakefield St. Ste. 22  
Rochester, NH 03867-1309  
332-9120 or  
800-862-5300  
FAX: 335-5993

TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964 or 711

DFA Form 754A  
02/10 Rev 1/12 Rev2 4/14 Rev3 5/16  
DFA SR 10-05

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# Your Right to Claim Good Cause for Non-Cooperation with Child Support Requirements

NH Department of Health & Human Services  
Division of Family Assistance  
Hugh Gallen State Office  
Complex, Brown Building,  
129 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301-3857  
[www.dhhs.nh.gov/DFA](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DFA)

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